

The Royal Martyr. 24

A
S E R M O N
P R E A C H ' D

Before Their EXCELLENCIES the
Lords Justices of Ireland,

I N
Christ-Church, DUBLIN,
On the xxxth of JANUARY, 1713.

By JOHN ECHLIN, A. M.

Publish'd by Their Excellencies Command.

The Second Edition.

*Pro tantâ Innocentiâ, pro tanta probitate, pro Justitiâ, pro pudici-
tâ, pro fide, pro veritate, pro Deo vivo cremâmur. Quod
nec Sacrilegi, nec Hostes Publici veri, nec tot Majestatis rei pati
solent. Tertul. ad Scapul.*

Τὸς ἁγίους ἡμῶν Δαυδ. Ignat. Epist. ad Polycarp.

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M A T. V. 10.

*Blessed are they which are Persecuted for
Righteousness sake.*

THE Beauty and Excellence of the Christian Institution may in this appear above all others, that it recommends it self by that plain and artless Simplicity, which is the highest Evidence of Truth. It is so far from using any Artifice or false Colours to engage its Disciples, that it proclaims to them, what Sufferings and Miseries they expose themselves to by the Profession of it. Had an Impostor known that his Followers must have been involved in such Difficulties upon his Account, he would have carefully concealed it, lest they should be terrified and forsake him. But the Christian Lawgiver, with a surprizing Candor, publishes to his Disciples, that they must expect in this World the sharpest Persecutions, and the worst of Evils; they must *endure the Cross, and despise the Shame*, who follow him.

Certainly none other than an Omniscient Person, and one fully assured of the Divine Authority of his own Precepts, could foresee, that the Weakness and Infirmary of Mankind would ever break through those Dangers and Terrors, which he gives them notice of, to the embracing of his Law.

And whether the Corruption of Human Nature be such, that Persons eminently Righteous, and Upright to that Degree which he requires, must thereby become obnoxious to the Scorn, Injuries, and Persecutions of wicked Men; or, whether Persecution be an Artifice

of the Old Serpent to deter Men from the Truth, yet surely it did so little disturb the Propagation of the Gospel, that *the Blood of her Martyrs proved the Seed of the Church*; and the inimitable Constancy wherewith the Christian Professors underwent all Kinds of Death and Tortures, struck the Heathen World with Amazement, and hastened its Conversion, when it saw the Heroick and even Fabulous Acts of those, who were accounted Gods and Heroes, outdone in frequent Instances by Persons of a weaker Age and Sex. But among that *Cloud of Witnesses, that Noble Army of Martyrs* (if we except the *Captain and Leader of their Salvation*) as there was no one who in Earthly Rank or Dignity was equal to the Royal Martyr, whom we this Day commemorate; so there was not any one superior to him in the Constancy, Meekness, Charity, and Resignation of a Christian Hero.

How plain soever this may appear to impartial and considering Men, there are too many, who approving the Confusions of his unhappy Times, are offended at the Name of *Martyr*, which our Church bestows on him; and as they robbed him of the Imperial Crown of these Kingdoms, they would spoil him too of that of Martyrdom; condemning our Church for the Institution of this Anniversary Day, and for the Continuance of its Observation.

My Business then at present shall be,

- I. First, To shew that the Proper and Genuine Notion of a Martyr agrees perfectly to this suffering King.
- II. Secondly, To vindicate our Church in the Appointment of this Anniversary Solemnity.
- III. Thirdly, To shew what Reason, and even Necessity there is to continue the Observation of it. And,
- IV. Lastly, I shall touch upon some of those Duties, which this Day should bring to our Remembrance, and should excite us to perform.

First,

First, I am to shew that the Proper and Genuine Notion of a Martyr agrees perfectly to the King. In order to this, it will be necessary to state the Notion of a Martyr, to enumerate the several things required to a compleat and Evangelical Martyrdom, and then to apply them to the Circumstances of his Majesty.

The Word *Martyr* is taken originally for any *Witness*, but the Signification of it has been limited by the Use of Holy Writ, and Ecclesiastical Writers; by whom it is in a more eminent Manner ascribed to our Blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, * *who before Pontius Pilate Witnessed a good Confession*, and who is therefore called the † *Faithful Witness*. Nevertheless, it did not so peculiarly belong to him, but that it might with great Propriety be conferred on other Persons; thus it is applied to || *Stephen*, and Christ himself calls ‡ *Antipas* his *Faithful Martyr*.

The Two primary Conditions required to entitle any one to this Honour are mentioned in my Text. I. *First*, It is necessary that the Person should be persecuted, or suffer in some considerable Degree. II. *Secondly*, That his Persecutions and Sufferings should be for Righteousness sake, for bearing Testimony to some Divine and Religious Truth. III. *Thirdly*, But besides these it is further required that a Man should not be guilty of Schism, which made him incapable of Martyrdom. IV. And lastly, That he should flee from the Persecution.

1. The first Condition is, that the Person should suffer in some considerable Degree, as by Bonds and Imprisonment, Corporal Pains, or Banishment, any of which might denominate a Martyr; but the most exalted Degree of Martyrdom was, when a Man laid down his Life, resisting unto Blood, and sealing his Testimony with his Death. It is true, the Name of

* 1 Tim. 6. 13. † Rev. 1. 5. || Acts 22. 20. ‡ Rev. 2. 13:

Confessor was often given to those, whose Sufferings were not Crowned with Death, that last Suffering, and which by way of Eminence was called their *Passion*; but it is as certain the Name of *Martyr* was frequently bestowed upon them. Thus we find several of * *St. Cyprian's* Epistles inscribed *To the Martyrs and Confessors*. † *Tertullian* elegantly calls them *Martyres Designati*, *Martyrs Elect*, by a Metaphor taken from the *Roman Magistrates*, who after their Election were said to be *Designati*, *Designed* to their Employments. By these Means the same Persons underwent || repeated Martyrdoms, and were taken from the wild Beasts, and thrown again into Prison; and their Condition was sometimes counted as Noble and Illustrious as theirs who suffered even unto Death; *Utraq; res sublimis est pariter & illustris*, says * *St. Cyprian*. However, such was the Modesty and Humility of those great Minds, that they usually refused the Title of *Martyrs* given them by the Brethren, and † called themselves mean and humble *Confessors*. If therefore we would rightly conceive the Difference, which the Ancients made between *Martyr* and *Confessor*, we must distinguish them into Three Orders or Degrees. The First are they whose Sufferings were not attended with extraordinary Severity, and these were generally called *Confessors*. The Second is of those whose Sufferings were very signal and eminent, but not unto Death; and they modestly assumed to themselves only the Name of *Confessor*, but were honoured by the Church with that of *Martyr*. The Third is of those who had sealed their Testimony with their Blood; and to these the Name of *Martyr* was universally allowed.

* Ep. 9. 11. 77.

† In coron. Milit.

|| καὶ οὐχ ἅπασι οὐδὲ δις, ἀλλὰ πολλάκις μαρτυρήσαντες, καὶ ἐν θανάτῳ αὐτοὺς ἀναληφθέντες. Epist. Ecclesiarum Lugd. & Vienn ad Eccles. Asiae & Phryg. apud Euseb. E. Hist. l. 5. c. 2.

* Epist. 9.

† ἡμεῖς δὲ ὁμολογοῦμεν ἡμεῖς καὶ ταπεινοί. Ibid.

2. It is not however any Kind of Suffering which gives a Title to this Appellation, but it is the † Cause which consecrates the Suffering, and makes the Martyr; and this is the Second Condition expressed in my Text, That the Persecutions of a Martyr must be for Righteousness sake; that is to say, for the Attestation of some Divine and Religious Truth. Whether it were, 1. For Professing the Name of Jesus, and his Holy Institution, which as it is the most Sublime and Excellent of all Truths, so it is the Noblest Cause that can sanctify a Martyr's Sufferings. And this was the Case of the Primitive Christians under Heathen Persecutions; these are they of whom St. *John* * speaks, *I saw the Souls of them that were beheaded for the Witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God.* 2. Or, whether it were for bearing Witness to some particular Truth of the Gospel, in Opposition to any Heresy that sprung up; this was the Case of the Orthodox Christians, as often as some prevailing Heresy had Power to raise a Persecution; || which was sometimes done with Rage and Fury, not inferior to Heathen Emperors. Thirdly, When a Martyr suffered for Prevention of Schism, and to preserve the Peace and Unity of the Church, he was justly esteemed to suffer for Righteousness sake. This may seem a Paradox in these Corrupt Ages, which are so far degenerated from Pure and Primitive Christianity, that the Notion of Schism is almost razed out of the Minds of Men, and is so little understood or thought of, that 'tis looked on as a thing indifferent to Communicate with the Church, or with Schismatics; and Men go to their Communion promiscuously, as Humour or Interest inclines them. But in the Days of Old it was not so; Schism was then dreaded worse than Persecution, which only reached to

† Non ex Passione certa Justitia, sed ex Justitia Passio Gloriosa est.
August. contra Parmenian. l. 1.

* Rev. 20. 4.

|| Socrat. E. Hist. L. 2. Cap. 27.

some particular Members of the Church, and did not affect the whole; but the Wounds of Schism were felt by the Universal Church, which seemed thereby, if I may so speak, to suffer Martyrdom. Then it was counted an exalted Pitch of Honour for a Man to lay down his Life for the Peace of the Church, and to cement the Divisions of it with his Blood. This is expressly affirmed by * *Dionysius of Alexandria*; says he, *If a Man suffer Death, rather than make a Schism in the Church, his Martyrdom is no less glorious, than if he underwent it rather than sacrifice to Idols.* Lastly, Whenever Godly Persons were persecuted by the Wicked for the Cause of Piety or Holiness, they were accounted to suffer for Righteousness sake, and consequently to be Martyrs. Thus † *Cyprian* reckons *Abel* to be the *Protomartyr* of the World; *Let us imitate the Righteous Abel*, says he, *who led the way to Martyrdom, as being the first who was slain for Righteousness sake.*

2. The Third Condition required in a Martyr, is, That he should not be a Schismatick. *Esse Martyr non potest qui in Ecclesia non est*, says || *Cyprian*; He who is not within the Pale of the Church cannot be a Martyr. So that if a Man should sever himself from the Church, and, during that Separation, should even die for the Name of Jesus, yet he shall not receive the Benefit of Martyrdom. His Sin is of so black and foul a Stain, that it cannot be purged away, no, not by Blood. He has broke the Bond of Charity, * *and tho' he should give*

* Epist. ad Novat. apud Euseb. E. Hist. l. 6. c. 45.

† Epist. 56. || *Cypr. L. de Unitate Eccles. c. 12.* Tales etiam si occisi in confessione nominis fuerint, macula ista nec sanguine abluitur. Inexpiabilis & Gravis culpa Discordiæ, nec Passione purgatur. *Esse Martyr non potest, qui in Ecclesia non est.* Ardeant licet flammis & ignibus traditi, non erit illa Fidei corona, sed pæna Perfidæ. *Ibid.* Nullo modo autem propter Justitiam (scil. passi sunt) qui Christi Ecclesiam dividerunt. *Augustin. cont. Epist. Parmenian. l. 1. c. 9.* Extra Ecclesiam quippe occisus, Caritatem non habuisse convincitur. *Idem de Baptism. contra Donatistas. l. 4. c. 17.*

* 1 Cor. 13. 3.

his Body to be burnt, it can profit him nothing; it shall not be accounted to him the Crown of Faith, but the Vengeance reserved for his Perfidy and Desertion.

4. The Fourth Condition of a Martyr, is, that he should flee from the Persecution, and avoid it by all means consistent with a good Conscience, according to our Saviour's Precept, † *When they persecute you in this City, flee ye unto another.* And the Martyrdom of Polycarp, because, in Imitation of his Master, he fled from his Persecutors, is therefore called *Evangelical* by the || Church of *Smyrna*; she does indeed declare, how much she admires the Bravery and Constancy of those, who had made a voluntary Tender of themselves, and afterwards resolutely suffered; but she declares likewise, how little she approves their Conduct. And the Reason of it is evident; for if Persecution be a Sin, * he who wantonly and without Necessity offers himself, is an accessory and assistant to the Sin of his Persecutors; and if he provokes them, he is manifestly the Cause of it.

The Person in whom all these Conditions met was a compleat and *Evangelical* Martyr, and was worthy to be called an *Affector of the Faith*, the *Champion of Christ*, and *Conqueror of the World*: We are now to examine, how far they agree to our Martyr, and thereby shew what Right he has to that Honour.

The First Article, That he suffered in a great and eminent Degree, is of it self so clear, that I presume no one can doubt of it; that the highest Affronts, Insults, and Indignities were passed upon him; that he was pursued by Arms; driven from one Corner of his King-

† Mat. 10. 23.

|| Περιέμμεν γὰρ ἵνα παραδοθῇ, ὡς καὶ κύριος. — Διὰ τῆς τοιοῦτης ἀποδοχῆς καὶ παρὰ τοὺς ἐπιδιώκοντας αὐτοὺς, ἐπειδὴ καὶ οὕτως διδάσκει τὸ εὐαγγέλιον. Epist. Eccles. Smyrn. ad Philomel. Edit. Usser.

* ἔτι δὲ, τὸ ἵπν ἐν αὐτῷ, ὁ συνεργὸς μὲν ὡς τῇ τῆς δίκης πονηρίᾳ. Ἐν δὲ καὶ περιεργασίᾳ, τέλει αὐτῷ. Clemens Alexandr. Stromat. l. 4.

dom to another ; his Palaces and Revenues seized by unnatural Rebels, and he himself frequently without a Place to lay his Head in ; his Royal Consort and the Pledges of his Love forced into Exile ; he himself Sold, Seized and Imprisoned ; brought to the Bar of Mock-Justice ; and at last led out to Execution like a Criminal, and his Sacred Blood spilt by unhallowed Hands. All this is so notorious, that the greatest Enemies of Truth and him have not the Assurance to deny it.

The Third and Fourth Articles, That he was within the Pale of the Church ; and that he, who was *bunted like a Partridge on the Mountains*, fled from his Persecutors, I suppose are not less plain ; I shall not therefore waste your Time in proving of them, but shall be more particular in the Second, where I am to shew that he suffered for Righteousness sake.

It will not here be necessary to look up as high as the Original of that Rebellion, and enquire whether the Church was not principally aimed at by it : This is certain, from whatever Sparks those Fires were kindled, which broke out afterwards with so much Violence and Fury, all Attempts to extinguish their Flames were disappointed by the unreasonable Demands concerning the Affairs of Religion. In all Proposals and Treaties for Peace, the chief and Fundamental Article was,
 * “ For a total Alteration in the Church, and the Extirpation of Bishops. This was so constantly insisted upon, that when the King’s Affairs seemed to admit no other Remedy but that of Treaty, he was pressed to satisfy those Demands by the Queen Regent of France, the Cardinal, and the Queen his Wife, as being the main Point without which nothing could be done for him ; and this was urged in such a Manner, that
 † “ His Majesty looked upon their Negotiation, rather
 “ as a joint Conspiracy betwixt the Papists and the

* *Clarend. Hist. Rebell. Vol. 2. P. 91, 446. Edit. Fol.*

† *Vol. 2. p. 579.*

“ Presbyterians, to overthrow the Church, than as an
 “ Expedient for his Restoration. And the Leaders of
 the Presbyterian Party in the Parliament, and the *Scotch*
 Commissioners assured the *French* Ambassador, that “
 “ Nothing could be done for the King, unless he
 “ would give up the Church, extirpate Episcopacy,
 “ and grant all the Lands belonging to Cathedral
 “ Churches, to such Uses as the Parliament should ad-
 “ vise. As this was pressed by the Council of his pre-
 tended Friends, so was it likewise by the Threats of
 his declared Enemies; the Chancellor of *Scotland* †,
 with unheard-of Insolence, denouncing the worst of
 Dangers to his Majesty in Case of Refusal. All which
 had no other Effect than to manifest the Greatness and
 the Constancy of his Royal Mind. “ It was and is
 “ still believed, says the Noble Historian, that if his
 “ Majesty would have been induced to agree to the
 “ Demands of the *Scots*, they would have had a Party
 “ in the Parliament in *Westminster* to be satisfied there-
 “ with, or that they would thereupon have declared
 “ for the King, and have presently joined the Loyal
 “ Party in all Places for his Majesty’s Defence. But
 the King was too conscientious to buy his Peace at so
 Prophane and Sacrilegious a Price; and upon this Re-
 fusals, he was quickly delivered into the Hands of those
 who took away his Life.

Nor could the Condition of a Prisoner, nor the
 Hardships and Severities he endured in the Isle of *Wight*,
 any way shake his Resolution. In the memorable
 Treaty which was set on Foot in that Island, Four prin-
 cipal Propositions were offered to him. The 1st de-
 manded, that he should revoke all his Declarations and
 Commissions, and thereby approve whatever had been
 done against him. “ The 2d, concerning Religion
 “ and the Church, comprehended the utter abolishing
 “ Episcopacy, and all Jurisdiction exercised by Arch-

* Vol. 3. p. 24.

† Pag. 28.

“ bishops, Bishops, Deans, and Chapters; the aliena-
 “ ring their Lands, which should be Sold to the Use
 “ of the Common-Wealth; the Covenant, which was
 “ presented to his Majesty to take himself, and to im-
 “ pose upon all others; the Common-Prayer and Pub-
 “ lick Liturgy of the Church to be taken away, and that
 “ the Reformation of Religion according to the Co-
 “ venant, in such manner as both Houses had, or *should*
 “ agree, after Consultation with Divines, should be
 “ settled by Act of Parliament. This the King told
 “ them exceeded the Implicit Faith of the Church of
 “ *Rome*, which rather obliges her Profelytes to what
 “ she does hold, than to what she shall. The 3^d was
 concerning the *Militia*, under which Title the King
 was to invest the Two Houses with a Power of raising
 what Armies, and what Moneys they thought fit for
 the Space of Twenty Years. The last was concerning
 the Affairs of *Ireland*, by which he was to expose to the
 Mercy of the Two Houses, the Lives and Fortunes of
 all those who had served him with Honour and Fidelity.
 To all which, the Article of Religion only ex-
 cepted, he consented in their own Terms, how unrea-
 sonable soever; thereby making it apparent, that when
 no Human or Temporal Consideration was worth his
 Care; when he had divested himself of his Revenue,
 and the Power of Peace and War; when he had yield-
 ed up his most faithful Servants, at their own Inter-
 cession and Importunity, to the Rage of their Ene-
 mies, he then declared, that * “ Necessity could never
 “ warrant him to deprive the Church of God of an
 “ Order instituted for continual Use, and for Establish-
 “ ing a Succession of Lawful Ministers in the Church:
 “ And concluded, that he could with more Comfort
 “ cast himself upon God’s Goodness to support him in,
 “ and defend him from all Afflictions, how great soever
 “ that might befall him, than deprive himself of the

* Vol. 3. p. 172.

“ inward Tranquility of his Mind, for any Politick
 “ Consideration, that might seem to be a Means to re-
 “ store Him. All that could be extorted from Him in
 this black and melancholy Season, was, that “ He would
 “ suspend Episcopacy for Three Years; and then, up-
 “ on Consultation with Divines, among whom He
 “ would nominate Twenty to be present, and to con-
 “ sult with them such a Government of the Church,
 “ as should be agreed should be established. That He
 “ would not force any Man to take the Covenant;
 “ and would have the Privilege of his own Chapel,
 “ to use the Common-Prayer, and observe the same
 “ Worship He had used to do: And, that all Persons
 “ who desir’d it, might have Liberty to take the Cove-
 “ nant, and to use the Directory.

But these Concessions, large as they were, were not satisfactory; and so this Great and Innocent Person soon after submitted to the Stroke of Death, with a truly Christian Magnanimity and Resignation.

From what has been said, it appears, that the immediate Cause of the King’s Death, was his Refusal to abolish the Government of the Church, and to enforce the Covenant; and if He had died upon either of these Accounts singly, He had surely died for Righteousness Sake.

1. For if He died in Defence of the Church-Government by Bishops, He died in Defence of an Evangelical Institution; as might appear, if we had Time to enter into that Controversy, and therefore is truly a Martyr.

2. If He died rather than He would enforce the Covenant, it must be remember’d, that the Persons who made this Demand, were not only Rebels but Schismatics, who had raised a Persecution against the Orthodox Members of the Church; and the Purport of their Demand, in effect, is this; “ That the King
 “ should give the Countenance and Authority of
 “ Law, to that Schism and Persecution, which they
 “ had been empower’d to raise by a prosperous Re-
 “ bellion

bellion. So that in this Case, He died, rather than He would consent to Authorize, or Perpetuate their Schism; and consequently, His Martyrdom is no less Glorious, in the Opinion of the *Alexandrian Bishop*, than if He had died rather than offer Sacrifice to Idols.

3. But as it was obvious to all Men, so it could not escape His Majesty's quick Sight, that His Consent to dissolve the Government of the Church at that Juncture, might tend to the Destruction of the Christian Profession in these Kingdoms. He knew, that the Malignity of those Times, like a corrupt and unwholsom Season, had brought forth infinite Distempers in Religion: Swarms of new Sectaries arose every day, under the Names of *Brownists*, *Muggletonians*, *Levellers*, *Fifth-Monarchy-Men*, and such like; all pretending to new Light, and Revelation; most of them professing and disseminating all manner of Prophane, Heretical and Blasphemous Opinions, with Impunity. Of these jarring Elements was that Body of People composed, which treated with the King; and their Councils were united only in the Ruin of the Church, upon whose Pile, whenever they should effect it, every one hoped to find himself uppermost. His Majesty well saw what a *Babel* that must be, where the Confusion of the Builders Tongues preceded the very Foundations of their Structure: He saw what a Door would be open'd to Impiety and Irreligion, not only to the Scandal and Deformation, but, in all appearance, to the very Destruction of Christianity. How deep a Sense He had of this miserable State of Religion, we may learn from his own Excellent Letter to the Prince his Son. Says He, "We do not
" more affectionately pray for you (to whom We
" are a Natural Parent) than We do, that the Ancient
" Glory and Renown of this Nation be not buried in
" Irreligion and Phanatick Humour; and that all Our
" Subjects (to whom We are a Politick Parent) may
" have such sober Thoughts, as to seek their Peace in
" the

“ the Orthodox Profession of the Christian Religion,
 “ as it was Eſtabliſhed ſince the Reformation in this
 “ Kingdom, and not in new Revelations. Theſe were
 the Sentiments of His Maſteſty. If therefore His Re-
 fuſal to diſſolve the Government of the Church, be
 conſider'd in this Light, as it prevented, to the utmoſt
 of his Power, the *Abomination of Deſolation*; we may
 affirm, that He died for the Defence and Preſervation
 of the Chriſtian Religion; and He is therefore de-
 ſervedly placed in the Hiſheſt Rank of Martyrs, and
 accounted among thoſe *who were Beheaded for the Witneſs*
of Jeſus, and for the Word of God.

II. Having thus ſhewn the King to be a *Martyr* in the
 Proper and Génuine Notion of the Word, it will be
 eaſy to defend the Inſtitution of our Church, in Ap-
 pointing this Solemn Anniversary. In order to
 which, I ſhall conſider the Practice of Antiquity,
 and enquire upon what Occaſions Anniverſaries were
 formerly appointed; and then ſhew, that there was
 equal Reaſon at leaſt for the preſent Inſtitution.

I. If we look back as far as the *Jewiſh Oeconomy*,
 their Anniverſaries were diſtinguiſhed into Feſtivals
 and Faſts, according to the Occaſions of Publick Joy,
 or Publick Mourning. Their Faſts were kept upon the
 Return of that Day, on which ſome Publick Calamity
 had been received, or on which ſome Great and Ex-
 traordinary Perſon had been taken from them. We meet
 but one Anniverſary Faſt appointed by the * Law, that
 is, the Day of *Expiations*, on the Tenth Day of the Se-
 venth Month; yet the Prophet † *Zechary* mentions ſever-
 al others which were obſerved in his Time, and ‡ for
 many Years before. And we are * inform'd, that
 theſe Faſts were appointed in Memory of the Sac-
 cage of *Jeruſalem* by *Nebuchadnezzar*, the Conflagra-
 tion of their Temple, and ſuch like other Publick Cal-
 amities.

* Levit. 16. 29. † Zech. 8. 19. ‡ Cap. 7. 3. 5.
 * Joſippus apud Selden de Anno Civil. Judeor. 1. 50.

† The Days of the Departure of Great and Excellent Persons, as of *Moses*; and several others, were likewise celebrated by them in the same manner, tho' there was no Commandment for it in their Law.

• The same Usage obtain'd afterwards very early in the Christian Church, with this Difference, that the Christians did not Mourn upon those Days on which their Martyrs suffer'd; but Solemnized them as the *Natalitia*, or Birth-Days of a New Life, on which they were born unto Christ. It was a Custom among the *Gentiles*, to observe their Birth-Days with great Joy and Solemnity: At that Time, their Friends paid them some particular Compliment; the Salutation was commonly, || *Funde merum Genio*; and * Presents were always made to them by their Clients and Dependants. But these Solemnities were by the Christians transferr'd to that Day, which they accounted more properly their Birth-Day, the Day of their Entrance into a Life of Glory and Immortality. We have an early Instance of this kind, in the Celebration of the Birth Day of *Polycarp's* Martyrdom by the † Church of *Smyrna*; and it is upon an immemorial Tradition, that || *Tertullian* founds the Custom *pro Natalitijs annuâ die facere*. * *Cyprian* does not only mention it as used in his Time, but commands, that the Days of the Martyrs should be Registered in the *Fasts* of the Church, for the regular Observation of them. Says † he, *Deniq; & dies eorum, quibus excedunt, annotate, ut commemorationes eorum inter Memorias Martyrum celebrare possimus*. The Intention of the Church on these Occasions, was, as well to glorify God, to honour the Memory of her Martyr, and rejoice at his Victory over the Powers of this World; as to instruct and confirm others, to excite and animate them to undertake the same Glorious Combat. The Assemblies were held at the Tombs of the Martyrs, and were

† Selden, ubi supr. || *Perf. Sat. 2* * *Plin. l. 4.*
 Epist. 9. *Censorin. de die Natal. c. 1.* † *Epist. Eccles. supr. cit.*
 || *Coron. Milit.* * *Epist. 24.* † *Epist. 27.*

had in such Veneration, that the * Council of *Gangra* thought fit to inflict a heavy Censure upon those who should dare to condemn them, or the Offices which were performed therein. What these Offices were, as well as the Sacrifices there offer'd, of which † *Cyprian* and ‖ *Tertullian* speak, we may learn from the Emperor * *Constantine's* Oration. He tells us, That *Hymns, Psalms and Praises, are sung to God; and a certain Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, not stained with Blood or Violence, is performed in Memory of these Persons.*

2. This was the Practice of Antiquity. And if the Taking of *Jerusalem*, the Destruction of the Temple, or the Death of a Martyr, were thought each of them singly to afford sufficient Reason to observe an Anniversary Day; How is the Institution of our Church vindicated, by the Importance of this Great Occasion, in which all those Reasons are united? When the Royalties of the Crown, and Liberties of the People, were trampled upon by an Usurper; when our Temple was torn from its Foundations, and a Martyr, whose Dignity no Age or Story can parallel, suffer'd in one Day.

But perhaps it will be asked, Why this Day is kept with Fasting and Sorrow, when the Days of the Primitive Martyrs were Solemnized, as Birth-Days, with Rejoicing? The Answer to which is easy, and partly touch'd already. The Church, till now, had Flourished and Increased in the Blood of Her Martyrs; and therefore had Reason to rejoice for their Victory and Triumph: But when the Defender of the Faith, a Royal Martyr, was led out to suffer, our Candlestick was removed at the Extinguishing of that Great Light; and the Birth-Day of His Martyrdom, was obscur'd with the Funerals of the Church. For this Reason, therefore, as well

* Can. 20.

† Loc. citat.

‖ Apud Euseb. cap. 12.

Sacrificia pro eis Semper, ut Meministis, Offerimus, quoties Martyrum Passiones & Dies, Anniversaria Commemoratione, celebramus. Cyp. Epist. 34.

as to expiate the Guilt of that Sacred and Innocent Blood, and to deprecate the Vengeance that hangs over these Nations for it, the Church has wisely appointed a Fast to be kept with Humiliation and Mourning.

The Ground of this Institution is so reasonable, that many who desire to see it abolished, do not attack it that way: They say indeed there was Reason for the first Appointment; but then there is a *Temper* and a *Mean* to be observed in Publick Sorrow, and that now it may very well be laid aside. In Answer to which, I proceed in the

III. Third place, To shew what Reason, and even Necessity there is to continue the Observation of this Day. The general Rule in Cases of this Nature is this, while the Reasons upon which any Institution was made are of Force, so long ought that Institution to be observed and continued. If therefore

1. We consider this Day as purely appointed in Honour of the Martyr, I believe we shall find no Countenance from Antiquity to prescribe any Term upon the Expiration of which those Honours shall cease and determine; and consequently it now is, and always will be as reasonable to observe this Day, as it was at first to appoint it. And,

2. If we look upon it as a Day of Expiation, it will appear not only reasonable but highly necessary; for what Arrogance and Presumption will it be to say, Behold it is enough; we have made Atonement for our Sins; our Iniquities are blotted out, and the Wrath of Heaven is appeased?

3. If we consider it with regard to the Civil Policy, as it is a Monument to future Ages, a Mark to teach our Children's Children to avoid the Rocks on which our Fathers suffered Shipwreck, it will in this respect be necessary to preserve the Institution; for in all Appearance, and notwithstanding the Observation of this Day, the same Storms were gathering; and we have been in Danger to see the Return of those Miseries and Calamities which wait on them, even in our own

own Time. To make this fully appear, I shall trace the most signal Steps by which the former Age rose to so Transcendent a Degree of Wickedness; and then shew with what Exactness the present Age has endeavoured to walk after them.

It was the Practice of that wicked Faction to endeavour, by the most subtil Artifice, to alienate the Hearts of the Subjects from their Prince; and to that end, the Press abounded with infamous Pamphlets, tending to the vilifying of his Understanding, and to the Contempt of his Person; the bitterest Invectives upon his Government were dispersed, like a Pestilence, thro' the Nation; and because nothing was, or ought to be dearer to the People than their Ecclesiastical and Civil Liberties, great Diligence was used to represent the King as encroaching on them, as if Religion and Liberty were expiring, and ready to be swallowed up in Popery and Arbitrary Power. Thus they dressed up that innocent Prince in Colours of their own devising; they set him up as a Mark of Detestation, under the odious Characters of Papist and Tyrant, that he might stand alone and defenceless.

Such of his Friends and Faithful Ministers as were not to be imposed on, or perverted by those senseless Arts, were awed by Terrors, and were all involved in the common Calumny; they were traduced as evil Councillors, as Favourers and Abettors of Popery and Tyranny, and the Dutiful and Faithful Subject was treated as a Conspirator against the Religion and Property of the People. To make this Terror spread universally, the Life of a Great (and one who might have been an useful) Minister was attempted and unrighteously cut off. But if any yet remained obstinately Loyal, their Credit and Influence on the People was weakened and lessened by all imaginable ways.

Had there been no Original Quarrel to the Church, this were sufficient, that it was a Pillar to the Crown. As the King had always distinguished himself by a peculiar Piety and Zeal for the Doctrines, the Govern-

ment, and the necessary Authority and Discipline of the Established Church; so the Church had always profess'd the pure and unspotted Loyalty of the Primitive Christians; the Rebels therefore had just Reason to believe that the true Members of it would do their utmost to defend his Person, and to oppose the illegal Usurpations upon his Power. To undermine this; the only remaining Bulwark of the Monarchy, they used all wicked Means to promote an Irreverence and Dislike to the Hierarchy, Liturgy, and Canons of the Church: Her Doctrines were inveighed against as Popish, Slavish, and Dangerous to the Publick Liberty; Her Grave and Orthodox Ministers were aspersed in their Lives and Manners, and their Zealous Endeavours for a Decent and Orderly Worship were made so many infallible Indications of their Tendency towards Popery. Her Venerable Synods were not better treated, and the Right of making Canons, a Right of which the Church of Christ has been possessed from its Foundation, was denied to them. Divisions were encouraged amongst her Members; Old Heresies were revived, and New ones invented, to distract the People with great Variety of Opinions in Religious Matters.

When they had thus moved the People to Sedition and Discontent, had filled the Corporations with Factionous Magistrates and Preachers, the Management of a *Scottish* War proved of great Service to them; for tho' the War was ended, they contrived, by keeping up both Armies, that a Peace should not ensue: By these Means they raised a Moneyed Interest in their own Hands, and contracted to themselves a Dependance of all those who made Loans upon the Credit of it. Having thus fortified themselves at Home, they privately and traiterously enter into a League and Engagement with a Neighbour Nation, and then proceed openly to demolish the Church and the Prerogative.

No Prerogative was more necessarily inherent in the Regal Office than the *Militia*, without which it was impossible

impossible for the King to protect his Subjects from Tumults and Insurrections at home, or from Invasions from abroad; Yet this the Faction insolently demanded should be delivered to them, as the only Expedient to allay their Jealousies and Fears; at once depriving the Subject of the Protection of their Prince, and the Prince of his undoubted Prerogative of Peace and War. In this Manner they wrested from the King his Executive Power; nor was his Legislative Authority exempted from the same Violence. His Negative upon all Bills was refused to him, and the Stamp of the Royal Image declared unnecessary to quicken them into Laws: Thus the Votes of the Two Houses at first, but afterwards of the Commons only, were advanced to that Dignity by the Title of Ordinances of Parliament.

Under the Colour of this New Doctrine they levied War against him; and when God was pleased, for the Sins of these Nations, to deliver his Righteous Servant into their Hands, they then avowed the Principles upon which they all along had acted; by an Ordinance they declared void the Oaths of Supremacy and Allegiance, and as a preparatory Step to the execrable Tragedy of this Day, on the 4th of January 1648, they came to the following Resolutions:

Resolved, That the People are (under God) the Fountain of all just Power.

That themselves being chosen by and representing the People, have the Supreme Power of the Nation.

That whatever is Enacted or Declared for Law by the Commons in Parliament, hath the Force of a Law, and the People are concluded thereby, tho' the Consent of the King and Peers be not had thereunto.

Upon these Principles they proceed to Arraign, Condemn, and Murder him, to the Everlasting Dishonour
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of the Nation, to the Debasement even of Humankind, to the Reproach of the Protestant Profession, and to the great Scandal and Injury of the Christian Religion. In Memory of which grievous Calamity, we are commanded to assemble this Day; and it will be necessary we should continue so to do, if there be just Reason to suspect that the same Designs are again projected.

It is certain, that Facts of a like Nature generally have a like Tendency, and the same Principles do always produce the same Conclusions. If therefore the same Practices are now carried on, and the same Rebellious Principles now maintained, we must be very negligent and unconcerned Spectators of those things which do so nearly touch our Safety and Happiness, if we cannot see the same Design lurking at the Bottom.

Now it is evident to Men, who have made the least Observation upon the present Times, that great Industry has been used to pervert and alienate the Minds of Her Majesty's Subjects, that Pamphlets, Impeaching Her Administration, have been dispersed among the People; Her Actions and Intentions libelled in a most infamous Manner; Treasonable Papers dropped, and the Authors and Publishers, notwithstanding the highest Rewards offered to the Discoverer, are concealed from Justice.

Her Ministers are traduced with the Old Aspersions of Popery and Arbitrary Power; all their Endeavours for the Publick Service have received the most Unnatural and Injurious Interpretations; and the Life of a Great Minister has been more than once attempted. Artificial Fears have been instilled into the Subject to terrify them from Loans, and the Publick Faith has been undermined by Calumnies and Falshoods.

The Church, to which the Queen has always manifested Her Affections, and which She has supported by Her Countenance and Royal Bounty, has been attacked by Deists, Unitarians, Schismatics, and Libertines; Her Doctrines decried as Slavish and Popish;
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Her Clergy have been unjustly vilified in their Lives and Manners; Her Synods were long discontinued, to the dismembring of the Constitution, and the present one has met with remarkable ill Treatment. All the Old Methods to ruin and divide the Church have been again employed; Heretical Tenets have been published, not Clandestinely creeping into the Light from Anonymous Authors, but with Names, some by Publick Subscriptions, others with Formal Dedications to Ministers of State. Schism has been propagated in great Corporations, not only against Law, but against the united Inclinations of the Inhabitants; and when Legal Applications have been made against the Evil, a *Noli prosequi* has been entered, and the Prosecutors discouraged.

Has not the present War been as well husbanded as the *Scottish* was formerly, and kept on Foot for the same Purposes? To impoverish the Publick, and to raise a Moneyed Interest in the Hands of a few private Subjects, which should insult and give Laws to the Crown, and prescribe to the Queen in the Choice of Her Ministers? Have not a few private Persons entered into Cabals and Factious Engagements with Foreign States? Have they not attempted to subject a most necessary and essential Prerogative of the Crown of *England* to the Direction of those Powers? And have they not, upon the Strength of these Alliances, obstructed the Peace of *Europe* by all the Difficulties which Art or Power could raise.

Has not the Prerogative suffered both in the Legislative and Executive Branches of it? One Vote, and that of a dissolved Parliament, has been made Penal as a Law, and the sole Right and Prerogative of Peace and War has been limited by another.

Let every one compare these Facts with those of former Times, and judge of the Resemblance. And, For the same Principles, they are so publicly avowed, that I appeal to all who hear me, whether every Day's Conversation does not afford some Instance of it? Has not the Doctrine of Resistance entitled the Preach-

er to be recommended even to the Crown? And has not the Teaching Obedience to the Higher Powers been prosecuted as a High Crime and Misdemeanour? But to omit other Instances; in this Place, and (what one would scarce believe) even upon this Day, before the greatest Audience in the Kingdom, the Murder of the King has been in some Measure justified, at least the Principles upon which the Rebels acted were defended and maintained.

And now what must the Consequence of all this have been? God only knows, who has in Mercy stopped the Inundation, and set Bounds to the proud Waves thereof, saying, *Hitherto shall ye pass.* Let us therefore humble our selves before him in such manner, that he may not suffer them to pass further, and overwhelm us. Let us, instead of laying aside this Day, resolve to observe it for the future, more Devoutly and Religiously than heretofore we have done; and let us reflect seriously upon those Duties which it should bring to our Remembrance, and should excite us to perform.

IV. What these Duties are, I come now in the last place to lay before you.

I. As this Day is appointed for a Memorial to succeeding Ages, we should make a right Use of the wise Institution of our Fathers, and learn from thence to take effectual Care not to be undone a Second Time. When we see the License of Prophane and Seditious Tongues increase, and Practices set on Foot to weaken and divide the Church, to cast Reflection on the State, and to alienate the Hearts of the People; we may then know the Design to be declared, and that the Pestilence, which walked in Darkness, discovers it self openly. We should call to Mind, that these were the Arts by which Schismatics and Rebels overturned the Church and State; and by the Steps which at any time are taking, we may learn to make a Judgment of their Progress, and what Opinion they entertain of their own Strength; that so we apply early proportioned Remedies. To this end, we should boldly discourage and reprove

prove such Practices, and profess our Abhorrence and Detestation of those Principles which lead to such Confusion, which unhinge the Frame of all Government, and destroy the Peace and Society of Human Kind. And if any of us have received the least Infusion of this Poyson, let us make haste to expel it, or it will quickly taint both our Religion and our Loyalty; let us not flatter our selves by saying, "We hate the Conclusions drawn from those Principles; that we go constantly to Church, and would not, on any Account, engage in such Designs. But alas! How many have there been, who by these Means were betrayed insensibly from Guilt to Guilt, till at last they became Actors in those Things, at the very mentioning of which some time before they would be struck with Horror? The best that can be said for us, if we are sincere, is this; that tho' we are not wicked enough to engage our selves in such Designs, yet we are fitly prepared by our Weakness and Credulity to be made the Instruments of those who are; and therefore when we are drawn into a Partnership of their Guilt, we know not how soon we may arrive at the same Height of Wickedness our selves.

2. As this Day is appointed for a Day of Expiation, we should do well to reflect how the Guilt of this Crime becomes National: How it is possible to be so derived to us, that we and our Posterity may be involved therein: That so we may learn to avoid it, and to avert the Wrath of God.

If the Tragedy of this Day was acted by the Major Part of the People, there needs no further Account to shew the Guilt to be National; and if it was performed by the Few, As the Cowardise and Infamy of that Majority that suffered it is without a Parallel, so their Sin and Guilt is equal to that of the Original Actors and Conspirators: Human Laws make all Men Principals in Murder, who stand by, and do not interpose for the Prevention of it, because a tacit Approbation

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and Consent is thereby sufficiently implied; and it is this Consent, this Act of the Mind in all Sins, which chiefly contracts the Guilt, to which the External Act superadds but little: And by these Means, their Race and ours, if they Consent and Approve, are all equally Criminal; they may every one apply to themselves the Saying of St. Paul, *Lord, when the Blood of thy Martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting to his Death.* As long therefore as Men continue to lust after the same Wickedness, and to commit it in their Hearts; as long as Numbers shall be found in this, or in succeeding Generations, to Approve, Applaud, and Glory in that Execrable Deed, and to Propagate and Cherish those Infernal Principles upon which it was accomplished; so long will the sad Effects of it remain, to the Insecurity of all Government, to open the Mouths of Atheists against all Religion, under the Mask of which it was committed; and consequently so long will the Pollution of it descend to Posterity, and the Sword of the Destroying Angel be unsheathed.

It is our Duty then from our Hearts to detest and abhor such wicked Principles and Actions, lest we become Parties in that *Foul Offence*: We should publicly profess our Dislike of them, and we should make that Profession shine forth by an Exemplary Submission and Obedience to that most Gracious QUEEN who sits upon the Throne. It is our Duty to turn unto the Lord with Fasting, Mourning, and sincere Repentance, that we may wash away at last from these Nations the Stain of *Regicide*, and silence the loud Cries which ascend to Heaven continually from His Innocent Blood.

2. As this Day is appointed to Honour the Memory of our Martyr; it is our Duty,

1. Like the Primitive Christians, to offer up to God a Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving for the Victory of

of his Servant ; and to pray earnestly, if he should at any time call us to bear Witness to the Truth, that he would graciously endue us with a like Measure of Constancy, Meekness, Charity, and Resignation, to suffer for it.

2. The Example of this Great and Blessed Martyr should inspire us all with a true Zeal and Holy Ardour for Religion. It should warm the *Laodicean* Temper of this Age, and convince it, that there is something of Divinity in that, for which even Kings vouchsafe to Die. From hence we may learn, that no Man's State or Dignity is raised above the Obligation, not only of Serving, but of Suffering for the Church : And when he can no longer by his Power, Wisdom, or Piety, protect and defend it from the Invasions of Wicked Men, he should be ready, *not only to be Bound, but even to Dye for the Name of Jesus* ; and that in so doing, however elevated his Condition upon Earth may be, it shall be raised thereby to higher Honours.

Lastly, We may be here Instructed what an utter Contempt we should have of all Worldly and Secular Interests, when they come in Competition with that of Religion ; and consequently, that we should never be persuaded for any Secular Advantage to make Compliances and Condescensions to the Prejudice of it ; which as it is a Sin in Religion, so it is an Error too in Policy ; for every Compliance to Wicked and Unreasonable Men, does but embolden them to make higher Demands, and arm them with more Power to insist upon them. We may be likewise taught, not to give up the Interests of Religion in Times of Difficulty and Adversity, upon the plausible Pretence, that " *It is now Unseasonable to insist upon them, and* " it were better wait a more favourable Opportunity. But no Danger or Necessity can justify the *doing Evil that Good may come of it* : Let us every one in our several Stations, do our Duty with Integrity and Courage,

and

and not be terrified by the ill Uses which the Enemy will make of it ; and however gloomy and obscure the Prospect of its Issue may appear to Human Foresight, let us rest satisfied, that Almighty Providence will direct the Event to his Glory, who alone is able to bring Good out of Evil, Light out of Darkness, and Order from Confusion.

These Things, if ye do, happy are ye : *Then shall ye no more be termed Forsaken, neither shall your Land any more be termed Desolate ; the Righteousness thereof shall go forth as Brightness, and the Salvation thereof as a Lamp that burneth, and the Gentiles shall see your Righteousness, and all Kings your Glory.*

F I N I S.
